

We love to share success stories and this one came into our in box today, with their permission we are sharing it with you.

I popped into see Shaun the other day; a month after him starting his job at Stenning Leisure Centre as a cleaner. I first met Shaun about a year ago when he was a student at Plumpton College on their excellent *Supported Internship Programme*.

I first met Brian, the centre's manager about 28 years ago – he's my nephew, you see. Earlier this year I chatted to Brian about the concept of "job carving". This is a really simple idea where an employer *carves off* small slices of work from the duties other staff often don't have the time, or the inclination, to do. These are usually quite basic-skilled tasks, but they still need to be done. Brian always was a smart boy (even when he was little) so he called me a week later and said that by pinching a task here and a task there he'd managed to create a 15 hour-a-week post that he thought could be ideal for somebody with a mild learning disability or autism.

And that somebody is Shaun.



"I can't speak highly enough of Shaun," said Brian shortly after we'd had this photo taken. "The only reason he might be late is if the bus isn't running on time. His attitude is spot on. Some of my other staff might spend the first 10 minutes of their shift catching up with the gossip. Not Shaun; he says a quick hello to people, tucks his bag and coat away and starts work!"

I wondered if there were any problems during Shaun's first month. "No, not really" said Brian. "Occasionally, Shaun might spend a little too long cleaning an area to get it gleaming to a standard they'd be happy with at the Ritz but, as a manager, I can think of worse problems I have to raise with my staff!"

I spent an hour at Stenning Leisure Centre and what struck me most was the friendly supportive atmosphere; many of the staff told me how well Shaun had fitted into the team. Whilst he will probably always be quite a quiet person he's slowly coming out of his shell and is also getting to know some of the regular customers who like to spend a few minutes chatting to him.

So I have three *well-dones* to end this bulletin.

Well done to Shaun for working hard and never letting go of your dream to have a paid job... Well done to Plumpton College for your excellent preparation work... and well done to PFP Leisure for welcoming Shaun into your family. Like I say to all the employers I work with, you have got yourselves a potential diamond!

And talking of keeping it in the family, here's a family picture I kept of Brian for all these years.



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